

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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## Lottie Moon at work

# Doug Kellum touches the "lucky ones"

By Michael Chute

MANILA, The Philippines — It's early morning in the Philippines, and already a crowd of Vietnamese refugees has gathered in the gravel parking lot that fringes white, concrete-block buildings used for Baptist Refugee Ministries.

Suddenly, the crowd surges forward to meet a white pickup truck that roars into the parking lot, kicking up a trail of dust. Missionary Doug Kellum, a Mississippian, is returning to the Philippine Refugee Processing Center from an overnight trip to Manila, but the waiting crowd lets him know he's been gone too long.

— A young Vietnamese boy tells Kellum he loves a girl in the camp and wants to marry her. But first, he wants to know what Kellum thinks about it.

— An "Amerasian" teen-ager asks Kellum to help him find his father, a soldier in the Vietnam War. Knowing only the first name, this boy, like thousands of Amerasians fathered by American GIs, probably won't find the one man he desperately wants to meet.

— A distraught father looks for a son missing three days after a fight with some other boys. Someone said the boy was seen hanging from a tree down by a nearby bridge. The man wants Kellum to go with him to see if it's true.

The pace would simply overwhelm a lot of people, but Kellum is ideally matched for this assignment. A

trouble-shooter at heart, he's an "unreformed" workaholic who doesn't mind putting in 12-hour days. Kellum's also single, which helps, given the schedule he keeps. He's a modern-day "Paul," although Kellum wouldn't choose that label for himself.

Most importantly, Kellum really loves the Vietnamese people. His involvement with Vietnam began in 1970 as a U.S. Army officer in the war, and later as a Southern Baptist journeyman there.

If Kellum can't work in Vietnam, at least he can work with Vietnamese people: first as a volunteer helping refugees at Ft. Chaffee, Ark., in 1975; then as a volunteer at a Thailand refugee camp for five years; and since 1982, here at the Philippine government-run camp, funded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Director of the Baptist Refugee Ministries, Kellum supervises a staff of 10 Southern Baptist volunteers who last year taught marketable skills to 1,881 refugees bound for the United States. But rather than sitting behind a desk, Kellum prefers being out with the people, ministering to their needs. To find Kellum, all you have to do is go into the camp. He'll be the one drawing a crowd, speaking fluent Vietnamese, helping sort out problems.

Construction on the camp started in 1979, and Baptists came in a year later through the efforts of a Southern Bap-

tist volunteer, a former Marine colonel who pushed to get Baptists' foot in the door. At last count, 15 relief agencies besides Baptists work with refugees here. But in 10 years, Baptists have graduated more than 12,000 students through a vocational program that teaches typing, homemaking, auto mechanics, house construction, and driving.

Under the shade of a mimosa tree, Tran Thi Tuyet giggles as another student cuts an uncharted path across the infield of the Baptists' driving course, a one-lane strip of pavement complete with curves and inclines. When her turn comes, Tran settles gingerly behind the steering wheel, her first time in an automobile. Southern Baptist journeyman Lisa Davis slides in the passenger's seat beside Tran.

"What ... does ... the ... pedal ... do?" Davis asks Tran, carefully enunciating each word. The young Vietnamese girl answers correctly. "That's right, that's right," Davis says, and as the car lunges forward: "Don't push all the way on the gas pedal. No, I don't want you to do that. Slowly!" Under control again, perhaps only briefly, Davis lets out the breath she unconsciously sucked in moments earlier.

"This is all your Southern Baptist dollars at work," Kellum says, surveying the Baptist compound of four large buildings. He explains that the



'MODERN-DAY PAUL' — A "modern-day Paul" as he's called, Doug Kellum demonstrates his natural rapport with Vietnamese refugees as he meets a new group of arrivals at the Philippines Refugee Processing Center with a smile and words of encouragement. (FMB Photo by Joanna Pinneo)

U.N. provides housing, equipment, and buildings for many of the other church-related agencies working here. But he adds with a hint of pride: "We're the only agency completely self-supported — every building and every piece of equipment in the buildings."

Tennessee Baptists, in a three-year partnership with Baptists in the Philippines, built the newest building — the typing center — in February last year.

About 98 percent of the refugees at this camp are United States-bound after screening by the U.S. government. Two-thirds are "ODP" — orderly departure program — Vietnam's legal immigration process.

"Boat people" make up the other one-third, screened in first-asylum camps primarily in Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Indonesia, and Singapore and sent here for processing. Most are South Vietnamese; less than 1,000 refugees from Laos and Cambodia came through the camp last year.

Twin white-frame churches — called United Evangelical Chapels I and II — mark either end of the two-mile-long camp. They are interdenominational churches since Southern Baptists aren't the only Protestant group working here.

Chinese churches in Manila built the church buildings, and Southern Baptists have the greatest influence in this work. Five refugee congregations — two Vietnamese, and one each of Laotian, Cambodian, and Chinese — meet in the two churches. Last year, more than 1,200 people accepted

Christ through evangelistic work in these two churches.

Kellum doesn't leave it at that, though. He follows up on those who make decisions. He maintains a list of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian Baptist churches in the United States, as well as other Southern Baptist churches. Before a member leaves, Kellum outfits him or her with the name, address, and phone number of the Southern Baptist church closest to his or her new home. He also provides a postcard to mail upon arrival in the States, addressed to that church, giving the refugee's name and address, and asking the church to follow up.

"We don't get involved in sponsorship here because we don't want word to get out that 'you become a Christian and you get a sponsor,'" Kellum explains. "But we do try hard to put the refugee in touch with a local church in the States. We've found that we have about three weeks to get that new Christian into a church or we lose him to other things that can occupy his time on Sunday morning."

Of the approximately 17,500 refugees who pass through this camp every six months, about 1,200 are Amerasians, a term coined for those fathered by Americans during the war.

An incredibly long journey nears the end for these people and 28,930 others processed in this camp last year. The lucky ones touched by Baptist Refugee Ministries are ready — physically and spiritually — for the challenge that awaits them in America.

Chute writes for FMB.



LEAVING IS ALWAYS PAINFUL — these two Amerasian teen-age sisters hold back no emotion as they struggle to touch friends one last time before the transport bus takes them to

Manila for a plane-ride to new homes in America. (FMB Photo by Joanna Pinneo)



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Guy Henderson

## Is there a winner?

It was refreshing to note the peaceful state conventions in most of the Southern Baptist Convention this year. We could stand more peace in the valley and kindly spirits willing to give a little.

Joel Gregory's castle story (San Antonio convention) is applicable in many ways. He told of an absentee castle owner who wanted to protect his property. The owner ordered the servants to build a rock wall around the castle.

Since there were no rocks nearby and the castle rocks were available, they proceeded to tear down the castle and construct the wall. Soon the castle owner had a strong rock wall protecting nothing.

I assumed he was seeking to illustrate the danger of destroying the SBC even as we seek to protect it.

After 12 years of recriminations, labels, distrust, secret meetings, and airport seminars, where do we stand? Is there a winner? It appears that we have a 55-45 percent syndrome with the so-called fundamental/conservatives consistently on top. Shall they be declared the winner?

The house of Southern Baptists is greatly weakened. Are we satisfied with the way things are today? Both

the fundamental/conservatives and the moderate/conservatives are bogged down in political matters. Why can't we shake this desire to destroy? We have Baptist colleges scampering for an illusive security, optional plans for supporting our activities, new news services, and newspapers bound to "objectivity."

Meanwhile, most lay people are wondering how long this is to continue. And, pray tell, what is a liberal or a fundamentalist? These are relative terms. Liberal or fundamentalist compared to whom?

Recently I read a book about liberalism in the SBC by a rock-hard fundamentalist. W. A. Criswell was called a liberal because of some notes in his study Bible. Billy Graham was liberal because he shared the platform with preachers and priests from other denominations. Even Dwight L. Moody was scorched because he permitted a certain man to speak in chapel at Northfield and opened the door to liberalism.

Surely in this vein of thinking Christ would be labelled as a liberal. He was called a wine-bibber, refused to rebuke his disciples for plucking grain on the Sabbath, and frequented the houses of tax collectors and sinners.

In all fairness, I've not encountered such fundamentalists among Southern Baptists. Neither have I found Southern Baptists who denied the deity of Christ, his death, or his resurrection. I feel that 99 percent of Southern Baptists are Bible-believing people who have grown weary of this titanic struggle to build a wall which will have little to protect if we continue the struggle.

Will we battle on until our convention is in shambles? Our seminaries and colleges will be jeopardized, our mission programs curtailed, and the SBC becomes a laughingstock to outsiders. Who will the winners be?

The battle will not be limited to the convention itself. Soon it will be on the state level and after that on the local church level. Yes, churches will be squabbling to see who believes the Bible the most. The proud pharisees will arise, thankful they are not like other men, but the real depositories of the truth.

Is there a prophet among us to say "enough is enough"? In Mississippi, Baptists have long held to the Bible. We stick to the fundamental teachings of the Lord and more important the Spirit of Christ. The fruit of the Spirit — love, joy, peace, longsuffering,



gentleness, goodness, and faith — is so much better than arguing, backbiting, and strife. If the battle continues, there will be no winners. We will all be losers.

Must we import more of this bitterness into our state? Let's wave the flag of humility and speak peace with our brothers. This is an urgent plea to

keep our fellowship as the finest in the land. No hidden agendas, no slander of personalities, no conservative/fundamentalist or conservative/moderate, but just brothers seeking to honor our Lord. There is yet hope.

Let's call a halt to tearing the castle down.

## Governance of schools dominates two meetings

By Associated Baptist Press

Governance of two of Baptists' oldest and largest educational institutions dominated the Texas and South Carolina Baptist conventions annual meetings in mid-November.

Major controversies erupted when Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Furman University in Greenville, S.C., each unilaterally moved to make their boards of trust self-perpetuating.

Both institutions cited fear of a "fundamentalist takeover" as the reason for their actions.

In moving to create the self-perpetuating boards, the two institutions distanced themselves from the state conventions, which previously had named trustees for the institutions.

In addition to Baylor and Furman, questions of governance of schools also appeared in the annual meetings of the Florida, Louisiana and Oklahoma conventions.

The Baylor and Furman actions set off controversy in the state conventions, both leading to called meetings of the executive boards, hints of lawsuits and widely divided opinions. In Florida, Stetson University moved to distance itself from the Florida Baptist Convention through a negotiated arrangement which will reduce the level of funding by the FBC in exchange for less involvement in the selection of Stetson trustees.

In Louisiana, a proposed charter restatement for Louisiana College in

Pineville was withdrawn from consideration after controversy erupted.

The charter revision, which has been under consideration by the college for two years, was aimed at streamlining the document. It reduces the present charter from 11 articles to six and is specific in maintaining its relationship with the convention and allowing the convention to name its trustees.

The revision was withdrawn and college officials pledged to dialogue with Louisiana Baptists during the next 12 months. Messengers voted to authorize the convention president to appoint a five-member committee to dialogue with the college and report back to the 1991 annual meeting.

In Oklahoma, messengers moved to keep a tighter grip on Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, passing a resolution calling for "necessary steps to be taken to ensure commitment to the historic relationship" between the school and the state convention.

However, a move to change convention bylaws to strengthen pastoral representation on the OBU board was defeated.

At the annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Houston, a record 7,106 messengers registered, primarily drawn by what has become known as the "Baylor Question."

On September 21, Baylor trustees altered the university charter to

remove the institution from control of a 48-member board elected by the convention and to place it in the hands of a 24-member self-perpetuating board of regents.

The charter change provides the BGCT shall continue to elect 48 trustees, but their duties will be limited to electing only one-fourth of the regents.

The BGCT Executive Board, in called session, named a 26-member committee to study the relationships between the school and the convention.

The committee met prior to the annual meeting, partly behind closed doors. It presented a recommendation which stipulated that Baylor trustees be elected according to the BGCT constitution and added the trustees "shall not assume the office of 'trustee' as defined in the amended Baylor charter unless and until they are directed to do so by formal action" of the convention and its Executive Board.

In presenting the recommendation of the committee, Chair Robert Naylor harshly criticized the Baylor action.

His presentation was met by sharp rejoinders from Winfred Moore, trustee chair and Herbert Reynolds, Baylor president, and calls from some Baylor supporters that Naylor, president emeritus of Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas remove

himself from the study committee. He declined to do so.

Baylor emerged again in the final day of the annual meeting as supporters made an effort to restore BGCT funds which have been escrowed.

A confusing series of votes followed. When it finally concluded, messengers denied by a 29 vote margin — 1,995 to 1,966 — a "request" that consideration be given to freeing Baylor funds now being held in escrow and to be escrowed in the 1991 budget.

The vote to continue to deny the funds came on the heels of another ballot taken on the same issue only minutes earlier that had passed 2,164 to 1,991.

The first vote was discarded and the new vote ordered after a convention official said there was an error in the printed version of the BGCT budget.

Since the error related to ministerial tuition scholarships, which he said erroneously had been included in the escrowed funds, a new vote was ordered.

One convention observer said the confused way the "Baylor Question" was handled probably left none of the messengers — supporters or opponents — satisfied and caused many of them to wonder if anyone, in fact, had won.

In South Carolina, the convention drew a record 5,084 registered messengers, but did not feature the

same rancor at the Texas convention. Furman trustees in early October

took similar action to create a self-perpetuating board of trustees.

Messengers voted to escrow money budgeted for Furman, a recommendation which came from the convention's General Board, which met on the day before the convention.

The action will hold the funds designated for Furman in an interest-bearing account for a year in order to permit dialogue between a committee to be named by the outgoing convention president and a committee to be named by Furman. Under the budget adopted at the annual meeting, Furman would have received \$1,828,000, about 3 percent of its operating budget, from the state convention.

After the general board recommendation was presented, Michael Hamlet, pastor of First Church of North Spartanburg, made a substitute motion calling for the convention to enter "friendly court action" against Furman.

Hamlet's substitute was defeated and messengers overwhelmingly adopted the recommendation of the General Board.

In another matter relating to a convention-owned school, South Carolina messengers approved changing the name of the Baptist col-

(See **SCHOOLS** on page 4)

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# Alternative Baptist publisher established

GREENVILLE, S.C. (ABP) — An alternative publishing house has been established in Greenville, S.C., by a group of Baptist pastors and professors.

The new venture, Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., is named in honor of two early Baptist leaders — John Smyth and Thomas Helwys — who were known for their strong stands on the issue of religious liberty.

The board of directors issued a statement announcing the purpose of Smyth & Helwys "is to offer supplemental and alternative materials for Baptists who have become increasingly concerned about the future direction of Convention Press and Broadman (imprints of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board).

"These channels for publishing will no longer be available, as is indicated by the recent action concerning Leon McBeth's work on the history of the Sunday School Board," the statement added.

McBeth, a professor of history at Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, was contracted to write a centennial history of the SSB, but trustees ordered the book shredded because the fundamental-conservative majority of the board felt it did not treat their political activities of the past 12 years fairly.

Frank Stagg, emeritus professor of New Testament at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and a member of Smith & Helwys board of advising editors, said: "As Baptists we must stand for an open Bible, open minds, and open discussion. The publishing venture which Smyth & Helwys is undertaking is a needed one. Channels once open to honest scholarship are now closed or closing."

Other members of the board of advisory editors include Samuel E. Balentine, assistant professor of Old Testament at Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.; C. R. Daley, editor emeritus of the (Kentucky) Western

Recorder; Bill Leonard, professor of church history at Southern Seminary; Randall Lolley, pastor of First Church, Greensboro, N.C.; Alan Neely, professor of ecumenics and mission at Princeton Theological Seminary; Mollie T. Marshall-Green, associate professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary; and Cecil Sherman, pastor of Broadway Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

Ronald D. Jackson, pastor of Tabernacle Baptist Church in Vidalia, Ga., and managing editor of the publishing house, told Associated Baptist Press plans for such a publishing venture have been in the talking stages for several years, but the firing of the editors of Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, encouraged a quicker start.

"When the firings happened, we saw what was happening and believed that honest publishing for Baptists was going to come to a standstill," he said.

Smyth & Helwys will issue its first volume, *Studies in Acts* by T. C. Smith, professor emeritus at Furman University, Greenville, S.C., in mid-December. The book is planned as part of a series, "Kerygma and Church."

In May 1991 a second volume in the series is planned, "Interpreting Isaiah for Preaching and Teaching." It will be edited by Cecil P. Staton Jr., assistant professor of Christianity at Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Ga. Contributors to the volume will include Lolley, Neely, Marshall-Green and Leonard from the advisory board of editors, as well as Daniel Vestal, pastor of Dunwoody Church, Atlanta; Stan Hastey, executive director of the Southern Baptist Alliance, Washington, D.C.; and a number of pastors and professors.

The first volume will be available directly from Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., P. O. Box 72, Greenville, S.C. 29602 and "in as many bookstores as will carry it," according to Staton.

## Philippines hit hard by "super" typhoon Mike

MANILA, Philippines (BP) — Baptists and missionaries in the Philippines are trying to determine how to aid the people hit hardest by "super" typhoon Mike.

Hurricane-strength winds slammed into northern Mindanao and the Central Visayan Islands Nov. 13. At least 270 people died and more than 1 million others were reported homeless.

Philippine President Corazon Aquino declared nearly half of the country's 73 provinces disaster areas after the typhoon. Initial estimates said more than 36,800 houses and thousands of acres of crops were damaged or destroyed.

The storm also sank about 70 passenger, cargo and Philippine navy ships. Some airports are still closed. At others, evening flights are canceled because there is no electricity for radar or runway lights.

Southern Baptist missionaries were attending a meeting in Davao when the storm hit and were out of affected areas. Some experienced difficulty in returning to their homes. No deaths among Philippine Baptist families have been reported, but missionaries

are still trying to reach remote churches to check on families there.

In Cebu, the country's second major commercial and transport center after Manila, electricity and telephones will be out for one to two months. Water supplies are scarce, and food is being brought in by boat and plane. Gas for cooking also is scarce; most people have switched to charcoal or firewood. Reports indicate long lines for water, kerosene and gasoline, which is being rationed.

Two of three Baptist churches in the Cebu area were completely destroyed. Nazareth Baptist Church in Minglinilla and Kalawisan Baptist Church on Mactan Island were blown down and flooded. Jaime Pancho, custodian at Nazareth church, said water and mud flooded through the area waist-deep after winds had blown down everything.

"Government agencies, non-government organizations and even private individuals do not know where and how to start relief operations," said Sampaguita Juarez, Baptist World Aid supervisor on the island of Panay. "Everybody is affected. We are cut off from civilization."

The Second Front Page

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## Executive Committee officers elect two vice presidents

By Dan Martin

NASHVILLE (ABP) — Two new vice presidents have been elected by the officers of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

Letters were sent Nov. 16 to the 77-member committee notifying them the six officers had elected Mark Coppenger, executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana as vice president for public relations, and Richard (Bucky) Rosenbaum Jr., manager of the conference center marketing section of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, as vice president for business and finance.

Although Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Executive Committee, declined to comment to Associated Baptist Press, word of the elections broke Nov. 20 when Coppenger told the Executive Board of SCBI he was resigning effective Dec. 31 to accept the SBC post.

Bennett told ABP: "No announcement will be made at this point in time. There will be no announcement until there has been sufficient time for the recommendation process."

When asked when an announcement will be made, Bennett replied, "I can't answer that."

Coppenger confirmed to ABP that he had resigned from the Indiana position effective Dec. 31, but deferred comment on announcement of the SBC job to Bennett.

In addition to Coppenger and Rosenbaum, sources close to the Executive Committee said a vice president for Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, will be recommended later.

Sources identified the choice as Albert R. Moeller Jr., editor of the *Christian Index*, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Moeller, when contacted by ABP, declined to answer whether he has been interviewed for the job. His public statement: "I don't want to make any comment on the deliberations of the Executive Committee. I hope they find the person they need to provide leadership at BP. As for me, I intend to remain editor of the *Christian Index*."

In background material sent to Executive Committee members, it was noted that under bylaws revised in September, the Executive Committee, by two-thirds vote, may authorize the six officers "to employ such other person or persons as they deem appropriate to serve until the next full Executive Committee meeting."

The Executive Committee authorized the officers to employ personnel at the September meeting.

The revised bylaws also note that members of the Executive Committee will be "informed in writing" of the election of "interim" personnel by the officers and will be given "sufficient time to respond to the proposed employment before such interim employment is made."

One Executive Committee member, who received the packet of informa-

tion from Bennett Nov. 21, the day after Coppenger resigned in Indiana, said the elections "appear a done deal. I guess they consider letting us know a day after the guy has resigned his present job 'sufficient time.'"

The vice president for business and finance position became vacant Jan. 15, 1990, when Tim A. Hedquist resigned to become administrator at Bellevue Church in Memphis, Tenn.

The other two jobs were vacated July 17, 1990, when the Executive Committee, in called session, fired Al Shackelford, vice president for public relations, and Dan Martin, news editor for Baptist Press.

In materials mailed Nov. 16 to Executive Committee members, Bennett noted that the position of vice president for public relations previously included responsibility for both public relations and Baptist Press.

"For more than a year, the Public Relations Advisory Committee and the Public Relations Workgroup have been studying the possibility of separating Baptist Press and public relations and establishing a national program of public relations."

"The president/treasurer recommends that these two areas of responsibility . . . be separated. The officers of the Executive Committee concur with the recommendation," he wrote.

Under the revised position description, the vice president for public relations also will become "co-manager of convention operations," along with the vice president for business and finance.

Previously, the vice president for business and finance had been manager of the annual meeting of the SBC.

According to the documents, Coppenger was interviewed by the six officers and Bennett Nov. 8. They note Rosenbaum was interviewed Oct. 22, and the decision to elect him was reaffirmed when officers met Nov. 8-9.

The officers of the Executive Committee are Sam Pace, Lawton, Okla., chair; Paul Pressler, Houston, vice chair; and Fred Wolfe, Mobile, Ala., secretary.

The chairs of the standing committees are Charles Sullivan, Lenoir City, Tenn., administrative and convention arrangements; Ronnie Floyd, Springdale, Ark., business and finance; and James Jones, Campbellsville, Ky., program and budget.

The material mailed to committee members notes Coppenger will begin his new duties Jan. 1, 1991, and Rosenbaum will start Dec. 15, 1990.

Coppenger said that since rumors were circulating, he felt he should announce the election to the Indiana Executive Board "before they heard it through the back door."

He was asked about other rumors which indicated he is being brought to the Executive Committee post in order to be in place to become president when Bennett, 66, announces his

retirement from the position he has held since 1979.

"I don't think in my life I have ever gone to something as a stepping stone to something else," Coppenger told ABP. "When I have responded to (God's) call, I have responded to that specific call; I have gone to the position I am called to and that is it."

Observers see Coppenger emerging as a key leader in the fundamental-conservative takeover of America's largest Protestant denomination.

He has been outspoken in his support of moves to purge moderate-conservatives from key posts in the denomination, including deleting the Indiana campus of the Boyce Bible School, an arm of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Coppenger was outspoken in his criticism of liberalism. He has served in a number of influential positions, including chair of the SBC Resolutions Committee.

Coppenger, 42, has been executive director of SCBI since September 1988. Previously, he was pastor of First Church, El Dorado, Ark., 1983-88 and assistant/associate professor of philosophy at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., 1975-81.

He is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark., with a bachelor of arts in philosophy; Vanderbilt University, Nashville, with a doctorate in philosophy; and Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, with a master of divinity degree.

It is noted on his biographical sketch that he has written "numerous articles for publication in church and denominational press and scholarly journals . . ." He also was interim editor of the *Indiana Baptist* for about nine months, immediately following his election as SCBI executive.

Coppenger also is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. He and his wife, the former Sharon South, have three children.

Rosenbaum, 36, is a native of Columbia, S.C. In addition to being manager of the conference center marketing section, he also is coordination specialist in the office of church programs and service and coordinator of the church program training center.

He has been an employee of the SSB since 1980. Previously, he worked for a bookstore, a publisher, a printing company, and was assistant director for public relations at Carson Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn.

Rosenbaum is a graduate of Carson Newman College and currently is enrolled in a master's degree program at Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., through seminary external education. He and his wife, the former Joann Burnette, have five children.

Martin is interim director, Associated Baptist Press.



# Criswell, Gregory agree FBC's future is downtown

By Toby Druin

DALLAS (BP) — W.A. Criswell and Joel Gregory agreed on a lot of things in Dallas Nov. 27, including the belief that the future of First Church of Dallas is in the heart of the city where it has been for 122 years.

They also shared the opinion that if all else fails, a lawsuit should be brought to restore the relationship between Baylor University and the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

Criswell and Gregory spoke to a noon press conference at the church following the election the evening before of Gregory as the new pastor of the church, effective Jan. 1. Criswell, who has been pastor since 1944, will become senior pastor.

Criswell, who will be 81 on Dec. 19, which is one of the reasons he will be "senior" pastor, he said, "to start off with," will continue to preach at the church's televised 10:50 a.m. worship service on Sunday.

Gregory will preach at the 8:15 a.m. service and 7 p.m. services on Sunday and at 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

Criswell said the decision for him to preach at the 10:50 a.m. service on Sundays was due to the church's commitment to KTVT, Channel 11, the Dallas television station that approached him in 1989 about televising the services.

"As time goes on, we will do whatever he (Gregory) would like," Criswell said, "maybe rotating it. He would preach and then I would preach. It is in the purview and direction of Dr. Gregory, but to start with... I will have one service."

Turning to Gregory, he added, "If that is all right with you."

Criswell, who said he will turn much of his time and energy to Criswell College, said he hopes Gregory's ministry at the church will last "50 years or more."

Gregory, 42, and pastor of Travis Avenue Church of Fort Worth, since 1985, will be only the third pastor the Dallas church has had since 1897. George W. Truett became pastor that

year and served for 47 years until his death in 1944. Criswell has served the 46 years since then.

As early as his 65th birthday Criswell said he had asked the church to consider getting him help in the pastorate. And some 28 months ago he renewed the request, asking for a co-pastor to work alongside him so that the church would have no "hiatus" between his ministry and that of his successor.

Gregory said the search committee had asked him to come and the church had called him — a unanimous, standing vote on Sunday night — to be pastor and successor to Criswell.

He praised Criswell and his "unabated" strength and said he would depend on him for counsel and wisdom, but said he understood that the "pastoral responsibility and most of the preaching responsibility... will fall to me."

Gregory praised the church as the "most vital, vivacious, energetic downtown church anywhere in the world. He pledged to keep it downtown but said it would have to innovate to meet the challenge of the future.

Criswell said he felt his decision to lead the church to remain at its downtown location, even when a banker offered to build him the "most beautiful church in the world" in a suburban location, was the highlight of his ministry at the church.

Both ministers commented on the future of the Southern Baptist Convention and the church's position in it as the largest of the SBC's 37,000 congregations.

Criswell said he expects the SBC to go forward and predicted its best years are ahead.

Referring to a meeting of moderates in Atlanta that is providing a funding alternative to the Cooperative Program to support Southern Baptist missions and educational causes, Criswell said, "That little bunch over there... would be like a flea on an elephant's body." He

predicted it will be "inconsequential."

Gregory said he will give his attention immediately to becoming pastor of the church, but will lend "whatever sympathy, weight, or influence I can as pastor, preacher, speaker, and writer" to furthering the "conservative resurgence in our denomination."

He said it was nothing new for him to be a defender of the inerrancy of the word of God. And responding to one question noting that during his BGCT presidency he was characterized as an "independent or bridge-builder" in the SBC fray, Gregory noted his "colleagues, associates, friends never had doubt where my sympathies lie."

He did not get more involved in the SBC before his endorsement of Morris Chapman for the convention presidency last spring, he said, because of his commitments to Travis Avenue Church and his heavy speaking schedule.

Gregory said he endorsed Chapman because he felt last June's SBC meeting in New Orleans was the most crucial since the founding of the denomination in 1845 and also because of Chapman's commitment to "enlarge the tent" of his SBC appointments beyond perceived political parameters to include everyone who confesses the perfect word of God.

The issue in the SBC remains, Gregory said, the nature of the Bible.

He said he had encouraged Robert E. Naylor, chairman of the committee on BGCT/Baylor relationship to do "everything" he can to restore the relationship between the university and convention that was severed when Baylor's trustees changed its charter on Sept. 21.

"It may not be the perfect will of God to settle it in court," Gregory said, "but it may be the permissive will of God before they are allowed to run off with 145 years of Texas Baptist history."

Druin is associate editor, Baptist Standard, Texas.

## Church starting may also include church restarting

By Mark Wingfield

Part 2 of 6

ATLANTA (BP) — Asking some basic questions could be the first step in determining whether a church is plateaued or declining.

Church growth specialist Lyle Schaller offers a seven-point test to indicate whether Southern Baptist churches are headed for plateau or decline.

Although not a definitive list, these items are common indicators of churches that are not growing, says Schaller, a popular church growth author and parish consultant with the Yokefellow Institute in Richmond, Ind.

1. How long has the church been meeting in this particular space? "If more than 15 years, you're probably headed for decline," Schaller says. The reason: growth causes churches to adapt their space to meet new needs.

2. When was the last adult Bible class started? "If more than two or three years, get nervous," he warns. "In larger churches, three months is too long to go without starting a new class."

3. Is the church accumulating capital or consuming capital? "If you are in a capital accumulation stage, you're probably headed up. If you're living off accumulated capital, you will tend to go down," Schaller says.

The reason: growing churches will add to their capital assets each year as a result of their vision for the future, while dying churches will survive off the fruits of the past.

4. Do baptisms exceed deaths? "In a growing church baptisms should exceed deaths by at least two to one, ideally three to one," Schaller says.

Net growth results when there are more people coming into the church than leaving the church either by death or transfer.

5. Is the adjusted value of member giving going up? Growing churches will show an increase in giving every year, he explains.

6. Do transfers in from other denominations exceed transfers in from other Southern Baptist churches? Growing churches tend to attract more people from outside their

denomination, which reveals the attractiveness of the church in the local marketplace, he says.

7. What is the most exciting landmark in the life of the congregation?

"By this I mean the one event that everyone in the church recalls and says, 'Ever since then, we've never been the same.' If that was more than 15 years ago, get nervous."

Wingfield writes for HMB.

Things are seldom what they seem, Skim milk masquerades as cream. — W. S. Gilbert — H.M.S. Pinafore

Well begun is half done. — Horace

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## SCHOOLS

From page 2

lege at Charleston to Charleston Southern University.

A substitute motion to name the school the Baptist University at Charleston failed 1,411 to 1,512. Messengers then approved the new name 1,637 to 1,272.

In Florida, messengers overwhelmingly approved a plan — jointly offered by Stetson University in DeLand, and convention officials — that gradually eliminates Florida Baptist Convention funding of the school in exchange for granting Stetson more autonomy in the election of the trustees.

When the plan was presented, it was billed as both a way to take the "abrasion" out of the relationship and to free up more money for missions causes in the state.

Under the plan, Florida Baptists will give up their right to approve the nomination of the university's 24 trustees, but will continue to participate in the nomination process for the 18 trustees who must be Baptists.

In exchange, the convention gradually will cut its financial support almost in half, from the 1990 level of

\$950,000 to \$500,000 in 1995. The \$500,000 level will remain in place until 2000 when the convention's obligation to the school will end.

The plan was approved overwhelmingly after messengers rejected a move to cut all convention funding immediately.

Under the plan, the money received by Stetson between 1996 and 2000 will be used to build a \$3 million endowment. Stetson will seek to raise another \$3 million, and, if achieved, the \$6 million will be used primarily for scholarships for Baptist students.

The new plan replaces a 1957 "working agreement" under which all 24 trustees were nominated by a committee composed of three current trustees and three convention representatives. The nominees were approved by the state convention and elected by the trustee board.

Under the new plan, the nominating committee will be expanded to seven by adding a fourth Stetson trustee. The committee will fill only 18 trustee posts and the nomination will be "reported" to the state convention but will not be subject to its approval.

Proponents of the Stetson plan said that in contrast to the controversies in Texas and South Carolina, the Florida action is a "model of love."

## Art Nelson, retired business manager, dies

Arthur L. "Art" Nelson, 72, of 1023 Briarfield Road, Jackson, retired business manager with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, died of heart failure Nov. 27 at his residence.

Services were held 10 a.m. Nov. 29 at Broadmoor Church, Jackson with burial in Lakewood Memorial Park.

Nelson, a native of Stambaugh, Mich., had lived in Jackson since 1944. He was a graduate of the University of Minnesota. He was an Army Air Force veteran of World War II. He was a volunteer with the Contact Crisis Center in Jackson. He was a deacon of Broadmoor Church.

He served as comptroller with Mississippi Products Co. of Jackson from 1946-57 and as comptroller-business manager with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board from 1958

until his retirement in 1984. He was also a longtime church pianist or organist in various churches.

He was also director of Gulfshore Assembly, 1960-65.

Survivors include wife, Nola Kate; daughter, Ruth Nelson Keyes of Brandon; sons, Robert E. Nelson of Ridgecrest, Calif., Donald A. Nelson of Murfreesboro, Tenn., William H. Nelson and Thomas R. Nelson, both of Jackson, and James C. Nelson of Madison; and 10 grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Contact Crisis Center of Jackson or the Cooperative Program.

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Nelson



# Evangelicals lose morality war

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — "While gaining political and numerical victories, evangelicals are losing the war on morality," Robert L. Thomas told over 475 theologians who attended the recent 42nd annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society at New Orleans Seminary. "Our greatest need is for more individuals whose lives are holy."

Thomas, professor of New Testament at The Master's Seminary in Sun Valley, Calif., delivered the presidential address during the largest-ever meeting of the organization for evangelical Christians. New officers were elected and theological papers were presented from a variety of writers on the general subject "Morality and Ethics."

"About 40 million people in America call themselves evangelical Protestants," Thomas said. According to a June 1990 Gallup poll, "The percentage of Americans affirming a personal commitment to Jesus Christ has risen from 60 percent in 1978 and 66

percent in 1988 to 74 percent in 1990; and 95 percent of these testify to a born-again experience," he said.

"Since evangelicals are generally recognized as the base center for this nation's morality, one could predict an environment of higher ethical standards than ever as we begin the last decade of this century. Instead, however, we seem to have reached an all-time low in national behavior."

"We see legal abortion claiming the lives of 1-million plus fetuses a year; a pornographic industry that annually brings in \$8-\$10 billion and is still on the increase; 18 million people addicted to alcohol and 28 million to drugs; homosexuality, a thoroughly disapproved lifestyle 30 years ago, is now accepted, is legal, and is increasingly respectable."

Alister E. McGrath, a professor of historical and systematic theology at Oxford University and a visiting professor at Drew University, said, "A recovery of confidence in Christian

doctrine is fundamental to a recovery of Christian ethics."

As the featured speaker for two plenary sessions, McGrath, said many 19th- and 20th-century writers have held the view that "Christianity consists in the imitation of Jesus Christ."

"In one sense, that is profoundly right and helpful," he said. However, this idea "presents us with a dangerously shallow and inadequate understanding of human nature, and a dangerously inadequate and low view of the person of Jesus Christ."

"He is God incarnate. He possesses the ability to transform our situation in order to enter into it, to change it from within and not from outside," McGrath continued. "To become a Christian is to enter into so close and so deep a relationship with him that we may in some way begin to be conformed to him. Conformity is the fruit of faith. It is not something we do, it is something that is done to us."

# Missionaries grieve for Liberia

By Donald D. Martin

LOME, Togo (BP) — Stripped of clothing and standing at gunpoint in a churchyard, a Liberian Baptist pastor and others were asked, "Who of you knows Jesus?"

The question was posed by an armed rebel — part of a force that captured the port city of Brewerville, Liberia, during last summer's rebel march toward Liberia's besieged capital, Monrovia. As they combed the captured area, a band of rebels found a small group of refugees hiding in a church.

The rebel leader ordered the huddled group outside and told them to undress. Among the refugees was the pastor, his wife, and their four children. The family had escaped Monrovia and walked north to Brewerville. There they had hoped to evacuate by ship to safety. For more than a week the family had lived on grass and water.

Both the pastor and his wife answered the question. Yes, they knew Jesus. At this the leader motioned them from the group, turned to his men and ordered the family shot.

When he heard the order, one rebel soldier balked. Another soldier who recognized the pastor said, "Take your family, get your clothes and go."

But at this the pastor balked. He looked to the group of refugees and said, "But they are my family also. I cannot leave without them."

The rebel leader paused and then said, "OK, all of you go."

The refugees eventually boarded a boat for Ghana and there found food and shelter in a refugee camp.

Jane Park, a Southern Baptist missionary nurse, heard the pastor's story while helping at the Ghana refugee camp. Mrs. Park and her husband, James, of Paducah, Ky., are temporarily assigned to the Baptist seminary in Ghana. In Liberia, Park taught at Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary. Mrs. Park was the seminary nurse. The Liberian pastor was a recent graduate of the seminary and one of Park's students.

His story and others were shared during a meeting of Southern Baptist missionaries assigned to Liberia but displaced because of the fighting there. Many of the stories ended in tragedy. Others spoke of courage and strength.

The missionaries met in Lome,

Togo, Nov. 12-16 not only to share news but to grieve for lost Christian brothers and sisters and pray for Liberia's future. The group of about 40 missionaries also discussed where they will go from here.

"It was a beginning," said Billy Bullington, west Africa area director for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. "Some (missionaries) have been able to handle what has happened in Liberia. For others the deep hurt and loss of friends and relationships in Liberia, not to mention the loss of their mission family, is just now coming to the surface and it's very painful."

Fighting continues in Liberia as three groups vie for control of the nation. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia, led by Charles Taylor, controls the largest region. Another rebel group is led by Prince Yormie Johnson, who broke away from Taylor. His troops now hold parts of Monrovia. The third group is a peacekeeping force sent into Liberia by the Economic Community of West African States. So far this multinational force has seen little success, but it has the support of Liberia's neighbors.

All three forces have occupied areas in and around Monrovia. Earlier, reports of cholera, contaminated water and rampant starvation streamed from the city, while bags of rice packed docks in neighboring countries because no group could assure safe entry into Liberia's ports. Recent reports say some food is now reaching Monrovia, but life in the city is far from normal.

During the mission meeting, Bullington met with individual missionaries to discuss their future. Some plan to continue in temporary assignments they took after evacuating Liberia early in 1990. Others will commit to two- or three-year assignments in other African countries. A few missionaries have chosen permanent assignments in other countries.

In time, missionaries hope to restart Liberian mission work on two tracks, Bullington said. One track will focus on church planting, evangelism, and leadership training while the second will meet social needs.

When the fighting does stop, missionaries likely will have to start from

scratch. In the Monrovia area looting has been so severe that scavengers have stripped buildings of plumbing, windows and doors.

"We'll be doing well to start with empty shells," said Betty Kay Yamaoka, FMB associate area director for west Africa.

Not all Southern Baptist missionaries have left Liberia. In Yekepa, a small town near the Guinea border, Earl and Jane Williams of West Monroe, La., and Knoxville, Tenn., are working with Lawrence and Alice Hardy of Savannah, Ga. They are distributing medicine and food and holding church services.

In Mano River, near the Sierra Leone border, Ed and Fran Laughridge of Rock Hill, S.C., and Great Falls, S.C., have set up a small food distribution center and are conducting worship services.

The Foreign Mission Board has spent more than \$300,000 in food and medical relief in Liberia and neighboring countries since fighting broke out in December 1989. Missionary Bradley Brown plans to visit Liberian refugee camps to determine how Baptists can meet spiritual and physical needs.

Martin writes for FMB.

## Costilow to leave Clarke College

On Dec. 31, J. B. Costilow will leave Clarke College. His retirement comes after 34 years of service as Clarke College's BSU director and almost one year as part-time director of alumni affairs.

Costilow will remain in Newton, where he will continue to pastor Liberty Church.

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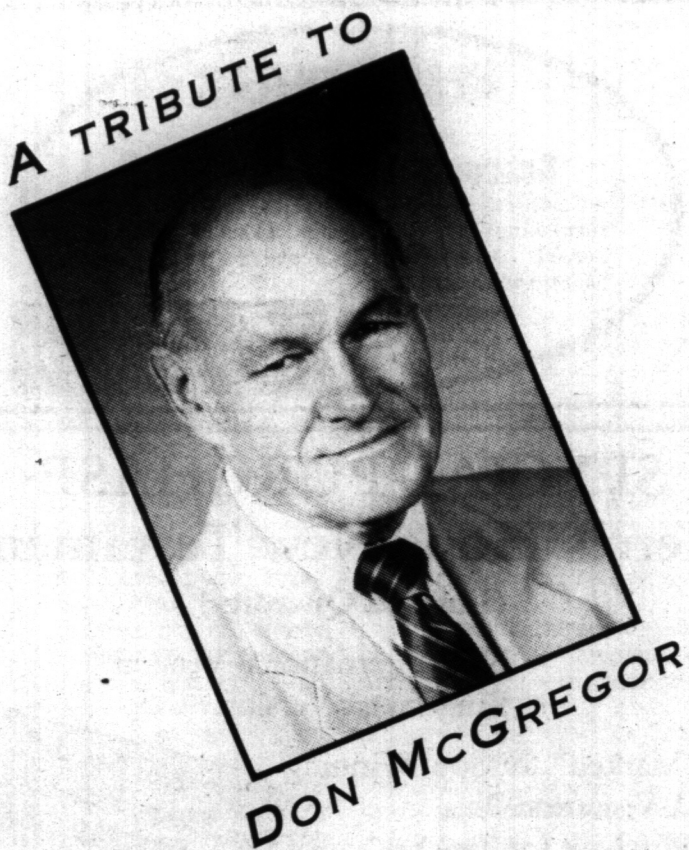
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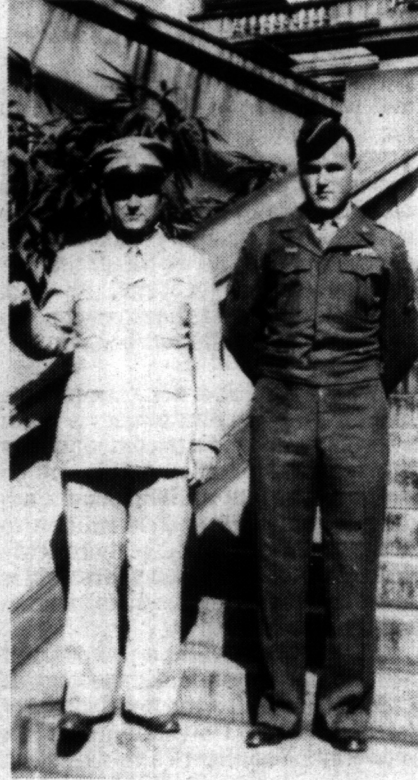
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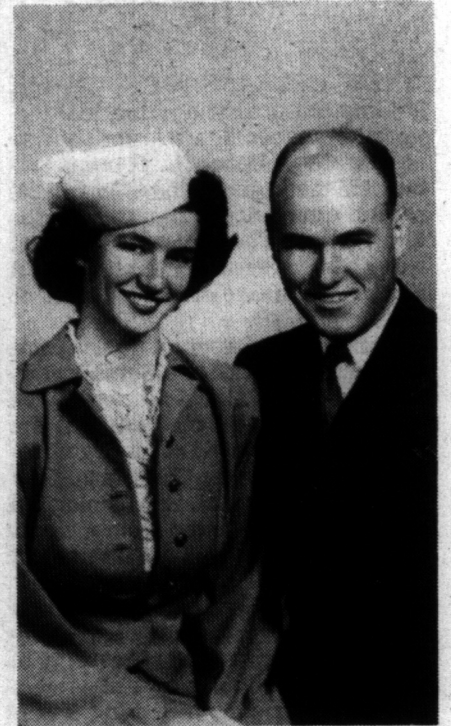
## EARLY YEARS IN TEXAS



Don McGregor spends his early childhood years at a house in the country, not far from McGregor, Texas.

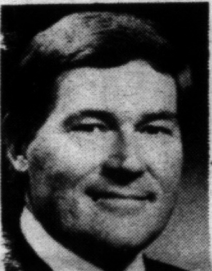


While both are in military service during World War II, Don and his dad, J. T. McGregor, meet in Washington, D.C.



Don McGregor marries Carlene Barnhill of Kingsville, Texas.

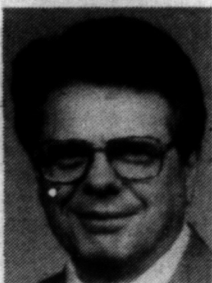
## BAPTIST RECORD EDITOR: 1976-1990



Joel Haire



Beverly Tinnin



Hardy Denham



Odis Henderson



Tom Hudson



Two former editors of the **Baptist Record** stand with Don McGregor in front of the house in Clinton once owned by J. B. Gambrell and where Gambrell began publication of the **Baptist Record** in 1877. Left to right are McGregor, Joe T. Odle, editor, 1959-1976, and W. C. Fields, editor, 1956-59.



McGregor attends a meeting at the Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va. He is pictured with Earl Kelly, executive director, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (now retired), and Keith Parks, president, Foreign Mission Board.



"When you become a journalist, the first thing you do is get you a hat." McGregor follows that admonition.

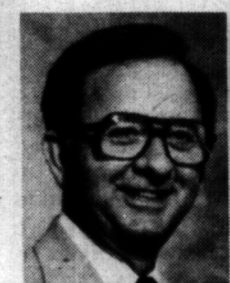
McGregor interviews a missionary, Dale Thorne, in the Middle East, 1980.



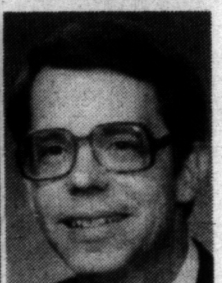
McGregor works in the press room, covering SBC session.



Ferrell Cork



Thomas Tutor



Odean Puckett



Dan Thompson



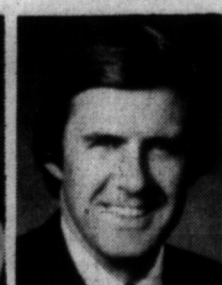
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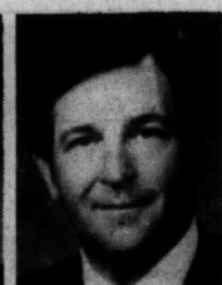
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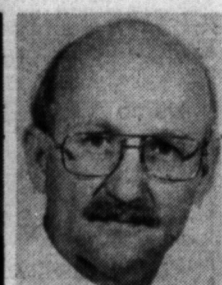
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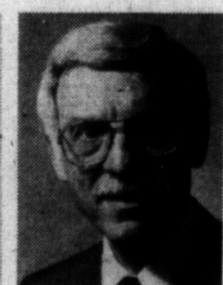
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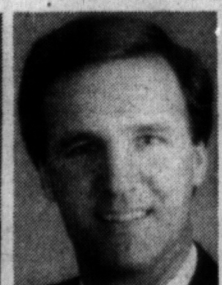
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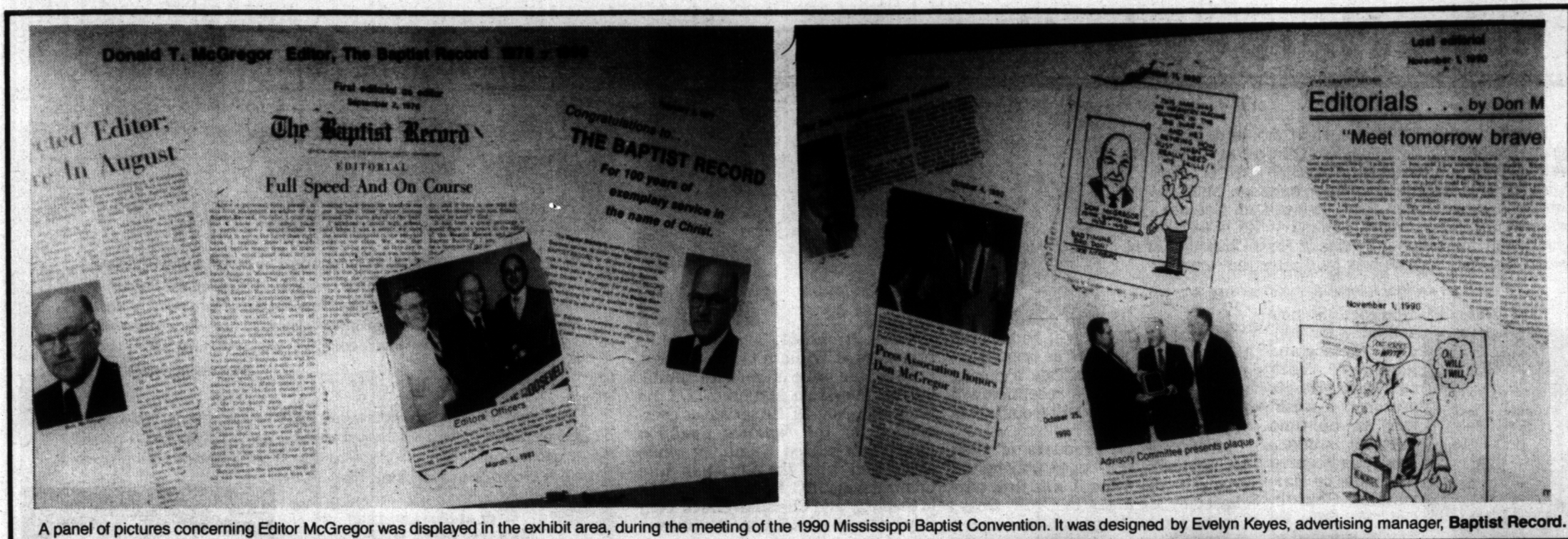
Robert Jackson



Bruce Hill

Twenty-seven men have served on the **Baptist Record** Advisory Committee during McGregor's editorship. Some of them have served more than one term. Nineteen of them are pictured on this page. Those not shown are Sid Harris, Houston; James Carr, Jackson; Clarence Wilkinson, Clinton; Claude Sutherland, Jackson; James Jackson, Columbia; Owen Lusk, Magee; Martha Chambless, Oxford; and Raymond Martin, Jackson.





A panel of pictures concerning Editor McGregor was displayed in the exhibit area, during the meeting of the 1990 Mississippi Baptist Convention. It was designed by Evelyn Keyes, advertising manager, Baptist Record.

## RETIREMENT TIME

Don McGregor announced his retirement in September, 1990, to be effective December 31 of this year, after a month of vacation. He has completed 34 years in Christian journalism, including positions as associate editor of the Baptist Standard of Texas, editor of the California Southern Baptist, and associate editor and editor of the Baptist Record.

In November, the Convention Board's Ex-

ecutive Committee named him editor emeritus.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board is honoring him and Chester Vaughn, retiring program director, MBCB, with a retirement dinner on December 6 at Primos Northgate in Jackson.

With this special issue, the Baptist Record seeks to pay tribute to its editor for the past 14 years.



Retirement time, as a rule, means more family time. In this get-together with Don McGregor are his wife, his two sons and their wives, his daughter and her husband, and his grandchildren. Back row, left to right, are Rosemary and Bob; Carlene and Don; Kayla and Wayne, holding twins, Corey and/or Casey. Front row: Jason, Angela McGregor; Walter and Alice Tyrone, holding Tiffani and Douglas; Aron Tyrone; and April McGregor.



The Baptist Record staff gives a retirement party honoring Don McGregor, at "The Oaks," Jackson's oldest house, at 823 N. Jefferson St. At left, foreground, is Ben Cain, Baptist Record printer. Center, foreground, is Ferrell Cork, chairman of the BR Advisory Committee, 1989-90. In background are McGregor's children, Wayne, Alice and Bob, and Bob's wife, Rosemary. With backs to camera are Florence Ann Larrimore, BR editorial associate, and her husband, Tom.



The Baptist Record staff presents to Don McGregor as a retirement gift a hand-crafted curio cabinet. At right is McGregor's wife, Carlene. At left is Renee Walley, circulation manager, Baptist Record.

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Letters of appreciation for McGregor arrived from across the nation and around the world, to be bound in a book as a gift to him.



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# Just for the Record

Thursday, December 6, 1990

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 9



Antioch Church, Prentiss (Jefferson Davis) held a GA/RA recognition service and reception, Sept. 30. Those GAs honored, pictured, top, from left, are Becky Terrell, Mandy Hamilton, director Denise Hamilton, Pauline Rester, Christy Hamilton, Cassie Terrell, Kristy Hartzog, Shanna Polk, and Naomi Polson. RAs honored, back row, from left, are Bill Lindsey, director James Polson, Bill Hartzog, leader Estelle Lindsey, front row, Corey Boyd, Austin Hamilton, and Chris Byrd.



Deer Creek Church, Rolling Fork (Sharkey-Issaquena) had a note-burning service Nov. 11. The church is debt-free for the first time since it was organized in the 1960s. Pictured, left to right, are deacons P. Sorrels, and C. Mangrum; and Alton Hodnett, pastor. Not pictured is Deacon E. Eldridge.



New Hope Church, Foxworth (Marion) held a GA recognition service, Oct. 21. Girls recognized with badges for their completed work, pictured from left, first row, are Lim Lowery, Mandy Stringer, Tiffany Kroner, Ginger Keggeris, Carina Evans, second row, Tish Lott, Stefani Alexander, Donna Alexander, Trish Keggeris, Kristen White, Leigh Slocum, Kelli Turnage, and Jennifer Edwards. Special recognition was given to Leigh Slocum and Stefani Alexander for completing all six levels of Mission Adventure. Linda Stringer, Tami Haney, and Carolyn Riley are GA leaders.



Six men from Yellow Leaf Church, Lafayette County, recently re-roofed crafts pavillion #1 at Camp Garaywa. Pictured are James Duncan, Wade Conner, Michael Alexander, Jim May, Howard Holmes, and Burwood Baggett. Marty Evans is pastor.

William Carey College celebrated the advent season with a Christmas lighting ceremony at 5 p.m. on Nov. 29. Thousands of tiny white lights were illuminated on the 90-year-old campus. The ceremony, planned by WCC Student Government Association, included the singing of carols by the audience.

A Crossgates Christmas will be presented by the sanctuary choir and orchestra at Crossgates Church, Brandon, Dec. 8 and 9, at 7 p.m. This year's program, entitled "I Have Seen the King," includes a 100-voice choir, 30-piece orchestra, several ensembles, children's choir, and drama cast. It will be directed by Mike W. Harland, minister of music.

## Bivocationals' national meet set for Memphis

The Southern Baptist Bivocational Ministries Association will hold its first national celebration on Dec. 13 at Southside Church, 4450 Knight Arnold Drive, Memphis, Tenn.

Registration will begin at 1:30 p.m., with an afternoon session, 2-5:30 p.m., and an evening session at 7. All bivocational pastors are invited to this bivocational pastors' conference. There will be no cost.

The National Council on Bivocational Ministries will hold its ninth annual meeting on Dec. 14-15 at the same place. Also all bivocational pastors are welcome to attend these sessions, according to Dale Holloway, Home Mission Board consultant, bivocationalists.

For more information, contact Holloway (932-4134 or 845-6496); Hollis Bryant at the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (968-3800); or Ken Cook (824-1108).

## Staff changes

Lake Forest Church, Walls (Northwest) has called Larry W. Sykes of Memphis as pastor, effective Nov. 4. A native of Bristol, Tenn., Sykes has served as associate pastor of Tennessee Avenue Church, Bristol, Tenn., and as pastor of Northwest Church, Knoxville, Tenn. He received his bachelor of church ministries from Mid-America Seminary, and is currently enrolled in a master of divinity program.

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## CONVENTION "HIGHLIGHTS" VIDEOTAPE

The 155th session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention videotape is now available for churches to borrow. It features —

- inspirational music • testimonies of "How I Met Jesus"
- portions of major messages preached

The title of the 58-minute video is "That They All May Be One." Many local ACTS churches and cable stations have already shown this tape. If you have not seen it in your area, contact Broadcast Services Department, MBCB.

## NATIONAL ACTS SPECIALS

"KINGDOM SONG," the contemporary and traditional sounds of Christmas, will be presented by the sanctuary choir of First Baptist Church, Madison, Mississippi. The program is scheduled to air on the ACTS Network, December 20, 1990 at 11 p.m. (Central Time).

"THE MVP Spirit," a 30-minute sports special will feature D. J. Dozier and Leslie Frazier. They share some of the inspirational stories and testimonies of Christian athletes whose faith has helped them overcome frustrations, victories and defeats in their careers. This will be shown on the ACTS Network, Saturday, December 8, 1990 at 9:30 p.m. and Wednesday, December 12, 1990 at 7:30 p.m. (Central Time).

Let ACTS know if you like these programs. Call 1-800-292-ACTS.

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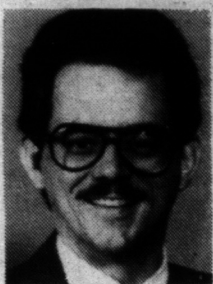
Helping to bring Mississippi and the world to Jesus



# What makes religion real and not just a game?

By Bob Rogers  
Luke 18:9-14

When I was in college, many of the local townsfolk would come straight from church to the college cafeteria to eat Sunday dinner. The



Rogers

students who had not been to church sat in a corner of the cafeteria in their jeans and tee-shirts, and we all frowned at them. Then I joined a church that had worship at 10 a.m., and I had time to change after the service, and still get to the cafeteria before most people. When the crowd came in after 12, wearing their suits and dresses, their eyes fell upon me, casually attired and nearly finished with my meal. With their eyes they said, "What a shame; I thought he was a ministerial student." We play a lot of religious games like that, don't we? Jesus told a parable in Luke 18:9-14 which shows us what makes real religion.

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted to themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (vs. 9). The word translated "others" is literally "the people";

## UNIFORM

probably this refers to the Jewish term Am ha-aretz, or "people of the land," an insulting name for common people who did not keep the religious laws. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican" (vs. 10). Jesus set up quite a contrast with this statement. The Pharisees were the best religious people in Israel; the publicans, on the other hand, were considered traitors and robbers. "Publican" in the King James Version comes directly from their Latin name, publicani, which meant men who contracted with the Roman government to collect taxes. They were hated because they worked for the occupying government of Rome; and because they collected more than they were supposed to, keeping the profits (as Zacchaeus admitted in Luke 19:8), and getting rich in the process.

In verses 11-12, the Pharisee thanked God that he was not a sinner like the publican, and he reminded God that he fasted twice a week and gave to the Lord 10 percent of all that he got. The Greek verb "to acquire" could mean that he tithed his income, as in the King James,

("tithes of all that I possess"), or it could mean that he went even further and tithed all that he purchased, as in the New American Standard Bible and others, ("tithes of all that I get"). Perhaps he bought food in the market which had already been tithed by the producer, but he went so far as to tithe on it again. His boastful prayer was not an exaggeration of the prayers of Pharisees. A first century prayer in the Jewish Talmud read, "I thank thee, O Lord, my God, that thou hast given me my lot with those who sit in the seat of learning and not with those who sit at the street-corners. . . I run towards the life of the Age to Come, and they run towards the pit of destruction."

The publican's prayer was a simple guilty plea, throwing himself on the mercy of the judge. Literally, his prayer was: "God, atone (forgive) me, the sinner." What a surprise when Jesus observed that the publican went home right with God, not the Pharisee (vs. 14).

God's radical grace could not be clearer. One man depended on his goodness to be right with God, while the other man simply depended on God. The Pharisee was clearly the better man morally; if one could be saved by good deeds, it would be he. However, salvation is all of God. It does not depend upon what you or I do, but

upon whom we trust. Once God in Christ is in us, our lives are remade; but our new lives are still all of God. Whatever good we do is because of Christ in us.

Don't miss the point of this parable. We often condemn the Pharisees and then proceed to follow their example. A Christian document from the early second century, *The Didache*, says, "And let not your fastings be with the hypocrites, for they fast on the second and fifth day of the week; but do ye keep your fast on the fourth and the preparation (sixth) day." *The Didache* missed the whole point. Fasting, tithing, and other religious activities are good; but they don't make religion real. What makes religion real? Jesus made it a matter of the heart — a heart totally dependent on the grace of God.

Questions to consider:

1. Do I compare my Christianity with others by counting the number of times I come to church, positions I hold, and money I give? Would I do the same things if nobody could see what I did?

2. If real religion is of the heart, whose heart can I judge? My neighbor's or my own? What does God see in my heart?

Rogers is pastor, Calvary Church, Gloucester.

# Clues show Jesus as divine Son — God incarnate

By Jim Smith  
John 5

When someone wants to identify an unknown entity, they begin to look for clues, to sort out the available facts, and to hear the testimonies



Smith

of others more familiar with the entity. In the scripture for this week Jesus gives several clues, testimonies, and facts to help those he is dealing with to realize that he is God's Son. He adds his own testimony because he does not want to leave any doubt as to who and what he is and the purpose of his ministry.

One clue Jesus left was his concern for the physical needs of mankind. The instance reported is one of many recorded in the Bible that tells of his concern for our physical needs as well as our spiritual needs. Jesus often ministered to physical needs first; then he could deal with the spiritual needs because they were very often interrelated.

Looking at verses 5-9 we see that for 38 years a man with an infirmity had been brought to lie beside the pool of Bethesda, hoping to be miraculously cured when the water was mysteriously moved (reportedly by angels).

## LIFE AND WORK

When Jesus saw him among the multitude, he had compassion upon him but chose to test his will, his desire to be healed.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" Jesus asked. For 38 years the man had desired to be healed but did not believe he had the wherewithal to do so (vs. 7). We might pause at this time and ask ourselves why Jesus did not choose to heal anyone else of the multitude present by the pool. Because every miracle of Jesus was accomplished for a purpose, I believe that this man was healed because of his physical and spiritual needs and to bring about the confrontation with the temple authorities that followed. Jesus sought to heal (correct) the religious practices of the day, as well as the people he encountered.

Jesus, after talking with the man, commands the impossible: "... Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." The indication is that the man trusted the word and command of Jesus. He was immediately made whole (restored to physical health) and took up his bed and walked away. The Jews (probably the temple authorities) were quick to take note that all these events occurred on the Sabbath which started a con-

troversy with the leaders. They quickly accused the man of breaking the laws of the Sabbath by doing the work of carrying his bed. They missed the great example given by the working of the miracle. In fact, they did not care about anything except their own preoccupation with their interpretation of the law. They became even more incensed when it could not be determined who had given this man the command to pick up his bed and carry it home, much less healed him.

Another clue Jesus gave as to his identity was his ongoing concern for the spiritual needs of those he encountered. Unlike the Pharisees who cared less for the needs of the men than for their interpretation of the law, Jesus cared for the total man, not just his physical needs but also his spiritual needs. Jesus sought out the man in the temple (vs. 14) to complete his ministry to him.

"Behold, thou art made whole (complete): sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." The indication from this verse is that the man was now whole, both physically and spiritually, because Jesus had healed his physical infirmity and forgiven his sins. He is now without sin in his life; and, being forgiven, he should strive not to sin again. Finally, Jesus reminds him that to be in a state of sinfulness is worse than being infirm physically, even for 38 years.

We see the grateful man going on his way testifying that it was Jesus who had completely healed him. Upon hearing the testimony of the healed man, the Jews began to persecute Jesus. They became more enraged at him when Jesus justified his action by saying that his Father worked on the Sabbath and therefore he healed on the Sabbath. They became hostile toward Jesus and sought to kill him because they saw him as a threat to their religious system and therefore to their life-style. They considered Jesus' statement to be blasphemy.

One could not think of himself as being equal to God, much less put it into words. Jesus wanted to be sure they understood his authority, which they rejected, was not of himself but from the Father. The Jews were more concerned with their religious system than they were with people and their needs. Jesus was more concerned for people than he was with religious systems, worship services, church programs, or buildings. He came to heal the hurts and correct the wrongs wherever he found them. We need to examine our priorities and our acceptance and practice of his teachings lest we find one day that Jesus is standing before God to testify against our religious system, selfish attitudes, and lack of regard for the needs of people.

Smith is pastor, Mt. Gilead Church, Meridian.

# Teaching about discipleship and missions

By Lannie Wilbourn

Luke 9:57-62; 10:1-6, 17-20

Three potential disciples present us with a situation that is modern. Each represents people in our churches dealing with genuine



Wilbourn

discipleship. The paradox of needing volunteers to help with our mission and facing the reality of competing commitments, priorities, and family loyalties is very real today. It is important for church leaders to understand Jesus' approach to enlisting workers. It is possible to recruit workers without growing disciples. It is not possible to grow disciples without also providing workers!

One man came to volunteer to go with Jesus. It is likely that the heady experience of crowds following Jesus had infected this volunteer. Jesus quickly pointed out that he had no earthly home to which he could go. In fact, his whole earthly life was filled with rejection. At Bethlehem there was no room in the inn. In Nazareth he was rejected. In Judea he was a semi-fugitive from the religious leaders. In Gadara they begged him to leave. On Golgotha

## BIBLE BOOK

he cried out to his father, "Why have you forsaken me?" The plight of the homeless in the United States is a real tragedy. We hear stories of unemployed professionals who have lost their homes. It is tragic. There was no further conversation after Jesus pointed out his homelessness.

Jesus invited another man in the crowd to be his disciple. Luke was weaving another story of teachable moments for training disciples into the fabric of his gospel. This second man had a priority other than discipleship. It is hard to criticize one's desire to bury his father. Eastern culture considered burial a duty of kindness that exempted one from synagogue and temple responsibilities. The custom wasn't unlike today's businesses that allow employees time off for funerals. Death in a family interrupts most activities and is given top priority. Jesus told the man who was following him to let the spiritually dead bury the physically. In his way he emphasizes the urgency of the task of discipleship. Consider this fact. The man had left his funeral duties long enough to be in the crowd. Does this indicate a half-hearted

response to his duty which became an excuse for him to not become a whole-hearted disciple? This man had heard enough to trust the words of Jesus' teaching but did not trust the command of Jesus when he heard it!

A third portrait of a reluctant recruit is presented in verse 62. This man couldn't quit looking back long enough to walk forward. Note the word "back." He had followed Jesus some distance from his family. But the distance was his choice. When presented with unconditional commitment he was divided by loyalties "back there." Those readers who have tried to plow straight furrows with a two mule turning plow will know the impossibility of doing so while looking back. Young drivers are taught to be sure the gear selector is the same as the direction you want to go. Jesus' term, "fit for service in the kingdom of God" (9:62) is worthy for discussion. He consistently taught that "no one can serve two masters."

After the lessons from the reluctant recruits comes the joyous sending out of 70 or 72 disciples. There is disagreement over the number. In contrast to the three men in the previous versus 72 (NIV) is a lot. In contrast to the "plentiful" harvest the number is small. Perspective is important. How many are to be

won to saving faith in Christ is always the right perspective. However, it is also a depressing perspective if we look at the number of disciples. Jesus instructed those going on mission for him to pray for more to join them, "Ask the Lord of the harvest." Who knows the field and its potential harvest better than the owner. Rather than begging for workers in our churches, we would do well to ask God for disciples to work in his field.

"I am sending you" is authoritative. Peace is the message proclaimed. Provision is to come from those receiving the message. Urgency is part of the task. Jesus told the 70, "Don't go home to pack. Don't wait for the bank to open. Don't get sidetracked with conversation on the road. Don't waste time looking for better accommodations. The message is the main thing, deliver it." We do not know how long the 70 were on their missions. We do have a description of the joyful reunion, (10:17-20). They learned Jesus could be trusted. In the words of William C. Miller, "God has not promised us an easy journey, but he has promised us a safe journey."

Wilbourn is pastor, Pinelake Church, Brandon.



# The Baptist Children's Village

P.O. Box 27  
CLINTON, MISSISSIPPI 39060-0027



December 6, 1990

Christmas is always an exciting time! But this Christmas is very special for me. This will be my first Christmas as Father to "Mississippi's Largest Family". It is with joy in my heart that I speak for all of our children in wishing you only God's best at this Season. We also pray that this new year will find you enjoying God's richest blessings.

For every Christian the Christmas Season echoes with sounds of God's love. "For God so loved" is so very evident at Christmas. And because God gave His most precious gift, you and I are reminded of the joy of giving. The tragedy of Christmas is that so many spurn God's love and the tragedy of our children is that so many have spurned their love. Had it not been for the love and concern that each of you has displayed in this past year, Christmas would not mean so very much to our children. But your efforts — a sacrificial gift, a silent prayer, a special visit — have made our children so keenly aware of God's love and that makes Christmas so very beautiful.

As you gather with others of your family at this Season and meditate on God's blessings that have been so obvious in this past year, please remember the special needs of those who have not been so blessed. Many of our children will have a difficult time this Christmas because they feel so un-needed and even unwanted. This certainly is not the case, but their feelings are no less real. Your gift at this Season lets them know that someone does care. Your gift will not only help us to provide for Christmas but it will also help us feed and clothe our children for a new year.

Our CHRISTMAS FUND helps to assure our children of a great new year and your gift will certainly brighten the eyes and lift the hearts of every child that calls The Village home. May joy and plenty, and the peace and love of Christmas be yours throughout the entire New Year.

Sincerely,

*Ronny Robinson*

RONNY ROBINSON  
Executive Director



You may send your Christmas gift to:  
The Baptist Children's Village  
P. O. Box 27  
Clinton, Mississippi 39060-0027



Pictured are Executive Director Rev. Ronny Robinson, NEW BAPTIST CHILDREN'S VILLAGE BOARD MEMBERS Mrs. Billy Williams from Gautier, Mr. Tom Winstead from Clinton and Mr. Terry Wills from Eupora. WELCOME!

## Gifts of Honor and Memory

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(To be continued)



# Campers on Mission meet for fall rally at Biloxi

Big Ridge Boys, below, from Big Ridge Church, Biloxi, entertain Campers on Mission during this fall rally Nov. 9-11 at Mazalea Travel Park, Biloxi, Saturday morning, Seashore Manor senior citizens presented a skit.

Bobby Perry, director of missions, Gulf Coast Association, delivers a Saturday evening message to Campers on Mission, on the topic "Come Before Winter" — not putting off the most important things in life 'til it's too late, center. Sunday morning, Hollis Bryant spoke on the subject, "Praise God and Be Happy." Bryant is consultant, Cooperative Missions Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

Mary Thurman of Clinton makes a "Christmas birdhouse" during the craft workshop on Saturday afternoon, right.

Frances Allen, dean of Wesley College, Florence, and member of First Church, Ridgeland, leads the Bible study on Sunday morning on Hebrews 12:1-3, "The Persevering Heart," far right.



## Devotional

### Room in the inn

By Ron Kirkland

And she gave birth to her first-born son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2:7).

This must be December. The air is cooler, the traffic is heavier, and the decorations are out. Panic has not yet set in on those last minute shopping needs, but there is already a brisker pace to our walk and a sense of urgency about getting it all done before Christmas. Each year we start earlier and end more frantically. The shopping, travelling, cooking, planning, entertaining, celebrating, and overspending are well established traditions of Christmas; but our frantic paces put us in danger of making the same mistake that the innkeeper of Bethlehem made 2,000 years ago.

The infamous innkeeper of Bethlehem could manage only to fit Joseph and Mary into a cave below his inn that served as his stable. Mary and Joseph had to make the best of what was left over of his space. If he had known the significance of the night and that the King of Kings and Lord of Lords would be born there, we would think that the innkeeper probably would have gladly given up his own bed instead of sending them to the stable.

On the other hand, you and I know the true significance of this season. We know the truth about that night, and yet it becomes more difficult each year for us to fit Jesus into our Christmas plans. Even those of us who determine to keep the true meaning of Christmas at the forefront of our celebration often wind up frustrated and unsettled over failed plans or exploded budgets. We may read the Christmas story to our children before they open their presents, but our actions of commercialization speak much louder than our words. There must be a better way!

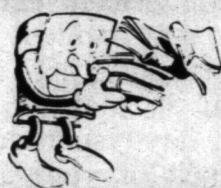
What if we really did the Christmas story this year? We have seen the Christmas story presented in dramatic pageants, but it would be wonderful if we lived out the story in our real live Christmas celebration. Think of ways that you could show the kind of love and total devotion that Mary and Joseph must have had for Jesus. Imagine ways that your dedication could be expressed as deeply as the Magi expressed theirs with the long and difficult journey and the offerings of the valuable gifts. How can your life reveal the simple awe and wonder of the worship of the shepherds that night? Exchanging presents with people who are expecting them is not the way to celebrate the spirit of Christmas giving.

We are celebrating Christmas when we offer ourselves to the King of Kings, and in turn, serve him by serving the least of those who are his brothers. What if we really did live out the Christmas story this year?

Kirkland is pastor, First Church, Amory.



Kirkland



## Book reviews

**KINGDOMS IN CONFLICT**, by Charles Colson; Harper & Row, New York; 1987.

Colson gives a resounding yes to the question of Christian participation in politics. They have civic responsibilities, they are to bring God's standards of righteousness to bear on the kingdoms of this world; and they have an obligation to bring moral values into public debates.

He promises a bit more than he can deliver in that the "how" is a bit weak. Several pages reflect the brilliance of this writer in seeing the gospel applied to earthly matters.

Two rather lengthy illustrations are used. The use of Nazi Germany and the murder of Bevinno Aquino are mainly historical facts in which Colson keeps saying, "What if?"

Colson is at his best relating his White House experiences and his knowledge of world leaders. Also, his prison work speaks for itself in its results and the wide recognition. Billy Graham declares the book "definitely worth reading." In paperback at \$5.95 it is an excellent addition to your library. — GH

**MacDonald, Gordon: THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME**, Faith and Inspiration for the Tough and Tender Moments of Life; Wheaton, Tyndale House, 1990.

Baptist pastor MacDonald writes this book from the heart of a father. It was first conceived as he and his wife took a final walk through the empty house they were leaving after 12 years of child-rearing and family life.

MacDonald takes us through each room of the house — kitchen, daughter's bedroom, son's bedroom, family bathroom, garage, basement, patio, living room, parents' room — and shares the triumphs and trials of a precious skill he calls "people building."

He defines this skill as the job of "standing vigilantly at the door of the home" to admit loved ones or monitor the entrance of ideas and people who will influence the vulnerable children who live within the walls of the house.

Each room recalls a memory of a compromise met or a trust established, a mistake corrected. Through the memories, MacDonald lays down essential guidelines for parents who are determined to be "people builders." applaud the gifts of each family member; bond each person to

the family unit with unconditional affection; enlarge the ground of trust as children get older; challenge children to make mature decisions; use the common routines of life to show yourselves models of healthy parental humanness; parents who are people builders love each other and provide security, judgment, and spiritual protection for their children.

Though nostalgic in its wanderings, this book is a refreshing encouragement to parents who fear that bringing up healthy children in the '90s is an impossible task. — STS

**JESUS, RABBI & LORD**, The Hebrew Story of Jesus Behind our Gospels; by Robert L. Lindsey; Cornerstone Publishing, P. O. Box 311, Oak Creek, WI 53154; 228 pages; paperback.

This is a delightful little book released in 1990. It is written in a folksy, narrative style that keeps the reader going along, page after page. The chapters are short so that it is easy to complete the thoughts that are presented in each. In the book Lindsey explains Jesus by translating the Greek gospels back into Hebrew. He feels the original language of gospel presentations was Hebrew and that the Greek is a translation.

All scripture references in the book are translations by Lindsey.

A great deal of the book is presented in personal references, and much of it is his interaction with David Flusser, a professor at the Hebrew University.

Lindsey went to Palestine in 1939, immediately after graduating from college, and spent almost 50 years there as a Southern Baptist representative (missionary), and raised his family there. During much of the time he was pastor of the Narkis Street Baptist Church Congregation in Jerusalem. The reviewer has had the happy privilege of visiting the Lindseys in their home there.

Robert L. Lindsey is a true Southern Baptist hero. This book is worthwhile if for no other reason than to get acquainted with Lindsey. It is also a valuable and easily read Bible study.

This retired missionary is well suited for such a project as he has accomplished in this book. He started out with a bachelor of arts degree in classical Greek from the University of Oklahoma and along the way also

earned a master of theology degree from Princeton Theological Seminary and a doctor of philosophy degree from Southern Seminary.

He is a unique person with a unique message that deserves to be heard. His book substantiates the validity of the scriptures. His life is a testimonial to the fact that he felt the hand of the Lord on his life and surrendered his life to the Lord. In so doing he became a blessing to the world. — DTM

**GOD'S CLOWNS** by C. Welton Gaddy (Harper and Row, 135 pp., \$13.95)

Because of the author's love of circus clowns and rodeo clowns, he began to explore the idea of biblical clowns. "We are fools for Christ's sake," Paul had written to the Corinthians. God's people, according to Gaddy, are the clowns of this world — the lovers, the idealists, the visionaries. He uses as examples of "God's clowns" Noah, Moses, David, John the Baptist, Peter, and others. He vividly paints a picture of the concept that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men." Gaddy, a former professor at Mercer University, is pastor of Highland Hills Baptist Church, Macon, Ga. This is a remarkable book, easy-to-read, unforgettable. — AWM

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